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TRUMP, PUTIN LIKELY TO MEET NEXT WEEK IN UAE, SAYS KREMLIN

The news of the meeting from Kremlin came on the eve of a White House deadline for Moscow to show progress toward ending the war in Ukraine

RUSSIA MUM ON HAVING UKRAINE ON TABLE

There was no immediate comment on Thursday from the White House and it was unclear how the announcement of the meeting would affect Trump's Friday deadline for Russia on Ukraine. Putin's foreign affairs adviser Yuri Ushakov brushed aside the possibility of Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy joining the meet, something Trump was open to

FIRST U.S.-RUSSIA SUMMIT SINCE 2021

- The meeting would be the first US-Russia summit since 2021, when former President Joe Biden met Putin in Geneva. It would be a significant milestone toward Trump's effort to end the war | **P12**
- Since the start of the war, Russia's relentless pounding of urban areas behind the frontline has killed more than 12,000 Ukrainian civilians

25%

OF UKRAINIANS TOLD GALLUP POLL THAT THEY WANT THE WAR TO END

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Rahul shows 1L 'vote theft proof' in K'taka

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

DAYS after his 'atom bomb' barb against the Election Commission of India (ECI), Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Thursday alleged large-scale irregularities in voter rolls, citing an analysis of the Mahadevapura assembly segment poll rolls in Karnataka for the 2024 general elections, where 1 lakh instances of 'vote theft' were allegedly found.

He said the 'election was stolen' through a collusion between the BJP and the EC, adding the judiciary needs to get involved in this because "the democracy that we love so much, does not exist anymore".

Rahul said six months of tedious work on Mahadevapura poll rolls threw up "criminal evidence" of 'vote theft', and alleged that the poll body was busy destroying such proof across the country.

He alleged that there was 'theft' of 1,00,250 votes in the Mahadevapura segment, with 11,965 duplicate voters, 40,009 voters with fake and invalid addresses, 10,452 bulk voters or single address voters, 4,132 voters with invalid photos and 33,692 voters misusing Form 6 meant for enrolling new voters.

Form 6, he added, was the most misused one. "Normally the new voters' age varies between 18 to 25 years, but in this category, there were voters with age 98, 97, 85, 75 years and so on. "There is not a single person in the 18-25 age group," he pointed out.

While the EC responded by demanding Rahul's signed declaration on his claims, he fired back, saying he made the remarks publicly and they can "take it as an oath".

In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP secured 6,58,915 votes in Bangalore Central, winning with a margin of 32,707. In the Mahadevapura assembly segment, the Congress received 1,15,586 votes as against the BJP's 2,29,632. "The Congress won all Vidhan Sabha segments except Mahadevapura, which swung the scales."

Heat on poll body

If EC denies machine-readable data on poll rolls for the past 10-15 years and the CCTV footage, they are partaking in the crime, Rahul said

It doesn't matter how senior or junior you are (in EC). One day, the Oppn will come to power. Then you'll see what we do to you

Rahul Gandhi

Submit written details of your charges, CEO K'taka tells Rahul

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

AFTER Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, alleged irregularities in the election process, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Karnataka, has dared him to submit written details of the allegations made. The CEO's office has also given Rahul a declaration/oath to sign and submit.

In the letter to Rahul, a copy of which is with *TNIE*, the CEO Karnataka, V Anbu Kumar, said: "It is understood that during the press conference held on August 7, 2025, you (Rahul) mentioned about the inclusion of ineligible electors and exclusion of eligible electors in the electoral rolls. You are also requested to sign and return the enclosed declaration/oath under Rule 20(3)(b) of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, along with the name(s) of the such elector(s) so that necessary proceedings can be initiated." P4

CM raises questions

Echoing Rahul Gandhi, CM Siddaramaiah on Thursday claimed, Narendra Modi became PM through electoral fraud | P4

Sources say no amount of aid can offset the huge losses to affected sectors

India Inc SOS to govt as US tariffs kick in

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

WITH the US imposing a massive 50% tariff on Indian products, the affected sectors—primarily textiles, gems & jewellery, and MSMEs—have warned of a possible disruption of critical supply chains, plummeting exports, and thousands of job losses. These sectors have also sought both fiscal and non-fiscal support from the government. However, government officials and industry experts say any support would fall short of offsetting the business losses caused by the high tariffs.

On Wednesday, the US imposed an additional 25% tariff over and above the earlier-announced 25% tariff on Indian exports, to penalise India for its continued crude oil imports from Russia. The first 25% tariff took effect on Thursday, while the second levy will kick in on August 27.

A senior official from the Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) said businesses might have stayed afloat with 25% tariff by absorbing 10-15% of it through margin cuts. "But with a 50% tariff, doing business with the US has become unviable. Many MSMEs will shut shop," the official said, warning that lakhs of jobs are at risk.

TARIFF TRACKER

The impacted sectors have sought relief measures such as deferment of interest on working capital, permission for SEZs to sell in the domestic market, and short-term relief packages similar to those introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, insiders say that even if the government steps in, it cannot bridge the cost gap.

Indian exports to the US stand around $87 billion, accounting for 20% of its total exports. Estimates suggest that 40-50% of these exports could be affected. India's top exports to the US include electronics (including smartphones), pharmaceuticals, gems & jewellery, textiles, organic chemicals, and machinery. While smartphones and pharmaceuticals enjoy zero tariffs now, most other sectors are subject to a 50% or higher duty.

The US is the largest market for India's garment exports, with exports worth $5.33 billion in FY25.

The gems and jewellery sector exported goods worth $12 billion to the US in FY25 and now faces a 50% duty. "The US is our single largest market," said Kirit Bhansali, chairman, GJEPC.

The MSME sector is also feeling the heat. "The additional 25% penalty could cut exports by halfMSMEs exporting to the US," said Anil Bhardwaj, secretary-general, FISME.

India-US trade talks on

Despite the tariff action, talks are on between India and the US for a trade deal. A US delegation will travel to India later this month. "We hope to find a middle ground," said an official

Putin to visit India, says Doval

Russian President Vladimir Putin will visit India soon, said National Security Adviser Ajit Doval. Sources said both sides are looking at an early date for the visit

'Wait for secondary sanctions'

Responding to a question on why India was singled out, US President Donald Trump said a lot more secondary sanctions are on the way

Prime Minister Narendra Modi conferring the maiden 'M S Swaminathan Award for Food and Peace' on Prof Ademola A Adenle, in New Delhi on Thursday | PTI

READY TO PAY HEAVY PRICE TO PROTECT FARMERS: PM

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

ON a day the first half of the heavy US tariff on India kicked in, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was willing to bear any significant personal cost to defend the rights of farmers and the dairy sector. "I know that I will personally have to pay a heavy price. But I am ready for it," Modi stated.

"For us, the interests of farmers is the top priority. India will never compromise on the interests of farmers, dairy sector and fishermen," the prime minister said in his address at the M S Swaminathan Centenary International Conference here.

The sticking point in the trade deal with the US is India's refusal to open up its farming sector. The US wants permission to sell genetically modified crops such as maize and soybean, and full access to India's dairy market.

Modi released a commemorative coin and stamp in the honour of the legendary agricultural scientist, Prof M S Swaminathan. He also established a global award, the 'M S Swaminathan Award for Food and Peace'. The first edition of the award was conferred on Prof Ademola A Adenle for his efforts in combating hunger in Nigeria.

The PM highlighted the achievements of yesteryear scientists in making the country self-sufficient in food and urged young scientists to focus on India's nutritional security.

LULA AGREES TO SCALE UP TIES

Brazilian President Luiz In'cio Lula da Silva called up PM Modi. They agreed to boost bilateral ties in trade, tech, energy, defence, agri and health at a time when both nations face 50% US tariff

LOW CONVICTION

You can't act like a crook, SC tells ED

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

WHILE flagging low conviction rates in cases investigated by the Enforcement Directorate, the Supreme Court on Thursday lambasted the central agency and said it cannot act like a "crook" and has to confine itself within the four corners of law.

"You cannot act like a crook. You have to work within the four corners of law. There is a difference between law-enforcing authorities and law-violating bodies," said a three-judge bench headed by Justice Surya Kant.

The bench, also comprising justices Ujjal Bhuyan and N Kotiswar Singh, made these observations while hearing submissions on the maintainability of a batch of review petitions filed by Karti P Chidambaram and others challenging the validity of the 2022 Vijay Madanalal Chaudhary (VMC) judgment which upheld various provisions under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) granting ED power of arrest.

Slamming ED for its low rate of convictions, Justice Bhuyan, quoting a minister's reply in Parliament, quipped: "After 5,000 cases, less than 10 convictions. Why? We are equally concerned about the image of the ED." The bench stressed that there is a difference between law enforcement agencies and those who violate it.

Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, appearing for ED, said one of the reasons for low conviction rates in PMLA cases is that the "rich and powerful use a battery of lawyers and file many applications at different stages to protract the proceedings." The hearing will continue next week.

WITH THIS ISSUE
CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE INDULGE 40 PAGES, INCLUDING 24 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)

FIGHT OVER WATCH: CLASS 5 BOY BEATEN UP BY SENIORS DIES IN VIJAYAPURA DIST

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayapura

A Class 5 student of a private school at Yogapura on the outskirts of Vijayapura, who was allegedly assaulted by his three seniors five days ago, succumbed to injuries on Thursday.

Tension prevailed at Yogapura when the body of Ansha Jagtap, 11, was placed in front of the school building by his family members and locals, who staged a protest alleging negligence on the part of the school management.

According to Ansha's parents, he was allegedly assaulted by three students from Class 9 after a dispute over a wristwatch he was wearing. The trio forcibly took Ansha's watch after allegedly assaulting him. Ansha was under treatment after the alleged attack.

Ansha Jagtap

The family members claimed that no action was taken though they informed the school authorities, including the principal, about the alleged attack on Ansha.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Basavaraj Yaligar and CPI of Gandhi Chowk station Mallayya Mathapati visited the school and persuaded the parents of Ansha and locals to withdraw their protest. The body was shifted to the district hospital mortuary.

In his complaint, Ansha's father stated that his son sustained a major injury three years ago while playing in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.

Though Ansha got treatment for it, he had some health issues. After Ansha was allegedly assaulted by his seniors in the school, he was admitted to a local hospital and discharged. But two days after coming home from hospital, he developed breathing problems and died, his father said.

Ansha's father, however, said he suspected that his son died because of the injuries he sustained in the alleged attack.

Police said they will conduct a thorough investigation.

He (Ansha Jagtap) was allegedly assaulted by three students from Class 9 after a dispute over a wristwatch he was wearing. The trio forcibly took Ansha's watch after allegedly assaulting him

- Parents of the victim

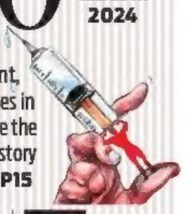
WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH...

A biker braves heavy rainfall as he negotiates a flooded road in Hyderabad on Thursday | PTI

NATIONAL SHAME

260 Doping positive cases in 2024

In a major embarrassment, 260 positive cases in one year could be the highest in the history of the country | P15



7,466 Samples taken in 2024

76 Athletics on top, lifting (43)

4 die after consuming herbal medicine for deaddiction

RAMAKRISHNA BADSESHI @ Kalaburagi

FOUR persons died — three on Wednesday evening and another on Thursday — after consuming herbal medicine for de-addiction at Imdapur village.

The deceased have been identified as Ganesh (30) of Shahabad town of Kalaburagi district, Laxmi (45) and her son Nagappa (21) of Burugapalli village, and Nagesh (27) of Madakal village in Sedam taluk.

Navita, a resident of Kachvar, lodged a complaint with Sedam police station on Wednesday, saying her mother Laxmi had called her and said that a certain Fakirappa Mutya of Imdapur village, under Sedam police station jurisdiction, is a traditional healer who gives herbal medicine for de-addiction. "My mother asked me to go to Imdapur and take the token for the medicine, and that they would come at the right time. I went to Imadapur with my husband and collected the token from Fakirappa," she said.

Meanwhile, her mother Laxmi and brother Nagappa came to Imadapur. Around 2pm Wednesday, Fakirappa called those who had taken tokens inside his chamber. Laxmi and Nagappa went in, as did Ganesh and Nagesh. Fakirappa Mutya gave them herbal medicine in plastic glasses, which they consumed, and within a a few minutes, her mother, brother and other two men fell unconscious.

As per Fakirappa's advice, they were rushed to hospital, but could not be revived, Navita said in the complaint, seeking police action on the healer.

Fakirappa was arrested and remanded in judicial custody on Thursday.

EXPRESS READ

NDA authorises Modi, Nadda to pick VP candidate

NEW DELHI: The NDA on Thursday authorised PM Narendra Modi and BJP president J P Nadda to pick its vice-presidential candidate, as the EC kickstarted the nomination process for the election. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said the bloc took a unanimous decision to authorise Modi and Nadda — Leaders of the House in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha respectively — to decide on their candidate.

Israel doesn't want to occupy Gaza: Netanyahu

JERUSALEM: Israel doesn't want to annex or occupy Gaza and its sole aim is to destroy Hamas and hand over the strip to a transitory government, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Thursday. He added that Israel wants to take control of Gaza's security after ending the war as soon as possible.